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# BS 505 Introduction to Biblical Studies: New Testament

Keith Brewer

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## Syllabus

**Course:** BS505 X1 (SP 2009)

**Title:** Intro to Biblical Studies: New Testament

**Hours:** 2.00

**Published:** Yes, on 10/31/2008

**Prerequisites:**

*None*

**Department:** Biblical Studies

**Faculty:** Dr. Keith Brewer



Email: [keith.brewer@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:keith.brewer@asburyseminary.edu)

Office: EXL EXL

SPO:

### Meetings:

During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 Online via ExL.

### Maximum Registration: 27

**Catalog Description:** This course is a concise introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts. Throughout the semester, students will be introduced to the concept and significance of the canon of scripture, to the Jewish and Greco-Roman background of the New Testament, and to particular books of the New Testament. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specialization represented among the course participants.

## Objectives:

Asbury Theological Seminary  
Department of Biblical Studies

B. Keith Brewer, Ph.D.  
Spring 2009

**Please Note: This syllabus is subject to change prior to the beginning of the semester.**

### COURSE SYLLABUS

### BS 505: INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL STUDIES – NEW TESTAMENT (2) EXL

#### 0. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

##### 0.1. Welcome to the Course!

Welcome to the on-line or extended learning (ExL) version of BS 505: Introduction to Biblical Studies – New Testament (2 credit hours)! I am very excited about your participation in this course. I well remember my first day of New Testament class at Asbury Theological Seminary with Dr. Mulholland in the fall of 1981. I actually wept quietly in class because I felt so happy and blessed to be studying the NT! It is my hope and prayer that this course on the Introduction to Biblical Studies – NT will positively impact your life and ministry!

##### 0.2. Personal Introduction:

Let me briefly introduce myself. I was born and raised in the metropolitan Detroit area of southeastern Michigan. I did not attend church while I was growing up. I became a Christian during my freshmen year of college which dramatically changed my life. I attended Spring Arbor College (now University) in Spring Arbor, MI and graduated with a B.A. degree (biology major, psychology minor, and secondary teaching certificate). For the next two years I worked as a Campus Life Director with Youth for Christ in three high schools in Jackson, MI and was an assistant wrestling coach at one of the schools where I also did my student teaching in biology.

I initially came to ATS with the intention of pursuing a M.A.R. degree in biblical studies. My career goal at that time was to teach high school biology and coach wrestling after attending seminary to make up for not having been raised in the church and for taking only one required religion course in college. However, I subsequently changed my program at the encouragement of Dr. Robert Lyon and others and graduated with a M.Div. degree. I then went straight to Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey and graduated with a Th.M. in NT. Finally, while I was on staff at

Aldersgate UMC in East Brunswick, NJ, I enrolled in The Caspersen School of Graduate Studies at Drew University in Madison, NJ and eventually graduated with both M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees in NT.

This is currently my seventeenth year as the Chaplain of the Wesley Foundation (the official campus ministry of the United Methodist Church) at Princeton University, where I am also the Director of the Princeton Graduate Christian Fellowship (affiliated with InterVarsity), a Fellow of Mathey College, and a Lecturer in both the Department of Religion and the University Center for Human Values. In addition to being an Adjunct Professor of Inductive Biblical Studies in the ExL program at ATS, I am also an Adjunct Professor of Bible and Theology at Somerset Christian College in Zarephath, NJ. I have taught about forty college and university level classes during my career including many courses on the NT. This is my eleventh time teaching a class in the ExL program at ATS (I am also teaching an IBS course on Matthew this spring). I am very much looking forward to this semester and your participation in the course.

Now it's your turn to introduce yourself in the forum on personal introductions in the Course Information Center.

## **1. CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Dr. B. Keith Brewer  
28 Deanna Drive #51  
Hillsborough, NJ 08844-4850  
Home: 908.431.9739  
Cell: 908.285.3792 (after 9:00 p.m. EST)

[keith.brewer@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:keith.brewer@asburyseminary.edu)

## **2. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A concise introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts. In the course of the semester students will be introduced to the concept and significance of the canon of Scripture, to the Jewish and Greco-Roman background of the New Testament, and to particular books of the New Testament. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specialization represented among the course participants. For MA students other than MA (Specialization in Bible or Theology).

## **3. COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Having successfully completed this course, the student will be able to:

- 3.1. Trace the development of canonization, discuss the meaning and significance of the canon and of the canonicity of the New Testament, and articulate the major issues involved in the relationship between the testaments;
- 3.2. Discuss the historical background of the Bible and critical historical issues surrounding the production of the various New Testament books;
- 3.3. Demonstrate the ability to make appropriate use of this historical information in the interpretation of the biblical text;
- 3.4. Identify major issues in interpretation;
- 3.5. Demonstrate the ability to make use of these interpretive insights in the actual reading and appropriation of New Testament texts; and
- 3.6. Articulate issues involved in the integration of biblical studies and the avenue(s) of ministry for which the student's degree plan is preparation.

## **4. COURSE TEXTS (Required):**

### **4.1. Primary Source (The Holy Bible):**

The primary text in this course is the Holy Bible. There are three basic theories behind the work of Bible translation: (1) Literal or formally equivalent; (2) Idiomatic or dynamically equivalent; and (3) Free or paraphrase. Some of the more literal versions of the Bible include the New American Standard Bible (NASB) and the Revised Standard Version (RSV) or the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Although both the King James Version (KJV) and the New King James Version (NKJV) fall into the category of literal translations, they are textually inferior to modern translations of the Bible. The New International Version (NIV) falls into the dynamic equivalence category. Paraphrases of the English text such as The Living Bible (TLB) and translations from the original languages of the Bible (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) by a single individual (and not by a committee) such as The Message (TM) are not recommended for the serious study of the Bible.

### **4.2. Secondary Sources:**

#### **4.2.1. Bibliography:**

Bauer, David R. *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003 (327 pgs.).

#### **4.2.2. NT Introduction:**

deSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004 (975 pages).

## **5. COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

**5.1. Assignments:** The student is expected to complete all of the assignments within the specified time. Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. (one minute before midnight) on each Sunday of the week during the semester (except during Spring Reading Week on April 05 and on the final assignment). Late assignments will not be accepted without prior notification and permission of the instructor, and then only in the case of a legitimate emergency. Missed assignments will result in an automatic grade reduction. Assignments should be posted in the Course Information Center with your last name immediately followed by the number of the lesson for external identification. For example, if I were submitting an assignment on Lesson 01, the title of my document would look like this: "Brewer01." Please include your name on the first page of every assignment as well for internal identification.

**5.2. Participation:** The student is expected to participate in the on-line discussions on a regular basis in our virtual classroom. We are an on-line learning community, not isolated individuals engaged in an independent study course! There will be many opportunities to interact with the instructor and the other students, including teams, in the class. Students are

enthusiastically encouraged to ask questions, make comments, discuss problems, share reflections, and respond to others throughout the semester.

**5.3. Time Commitment:** The student is expected to devote at least 7-8 hours per week to this two credit hour class (= 2.5 to 3 hours outside of class for every hour in class [+ 2 hours]). The student is encouraged to block out time each week for course work and protect that time from outside interruptions and distractions.

## **6. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:**

### **6.1. Course Requirements:**

**6.1.1. Reading of the NT:** The student is required to prayerfully and thoughtfully read select books of the NT and to assign a brief and descriptive title to each chapter. The instructor will provide more detailed information about the reading of the NT in a separate document posted in the Course Information Center. Reading of select books of the NT with chapter titles constitutes 20% of the final grade in the course.

**6.1.2. Weekly Reading Assignments:** The student is required to complete weekly reading assignments based upon the assigned chapters of David deSilva's *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004 [975 pages]). The instructor will provide more detailed information about the weekly reading assignments in a separate document posted in the Course Information Center. The weekly reading assignments constitute 20% of the final grade in the course.

**6.1.3. Group Integration Project:** The student is required to complete a group integration project. This project will creatively demonstrate integration between the NT and your particular MA program. The instructor will provide more detailed information about the group integration project in a separate document posted in the Course Information Center. The integration project constitutes 20% of the final grade in the course.

**6.1.4. Final Examination:** The student is required to take a comprehensive final examination based on the material in the textbook (i.e., deSilva). The instructor will provide a detailed study guide to assist the student in preparation for the final exam. The comprehensive final exam constitutes 20% of the final grade in the course.

**6.1.5. Class Participation:** The student is required to post at least *one* (1) significant comment, problem, question, or reflection AND post at least *one* (1) significant response to another student's post each week. Class participation constitutes 20 % of the final grade in the course.

### **6.2. Course Evaluation:**

Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Failing
100 - 95 A	89 - 87 B	79 - 77 C	69 - 67	59 Below F
94 - 90 A -	+ 86 - 83 B	+ 76 - 73 C	D+ 66 - 63 D	
	82 - 80 B -	72 - 70 C -	62 - 60 D	
			-	

## **7. COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Module	Lesson/Topic	Assignment	Due Date
<i>Spring Semester Classes Begin on Monday, February 09, 2009</i>			
Module 00	Lesson 00 Introduction to Course	Read deSilva (pp. 19-27)	Monday, Feb. 09 <sup>th</sup>
Module 01	Lesson 01 Cannon of NT	Read deSilva, Ch. 1 (pp. 29-36)	Sunday, Feb. 15 <sup>th</sup>
Module 02 First Century World	Lesson 02 Environment of NT	Read deSilva, Ch. 2 (pp. 37-110)	Sunday, Feb. 22 <sup>nd</sup>
	Lesson 03 Culture of NT	Read deSilva, Ch. 3 (pp. 111-144)	Sunday, Mar. 01 <sup>st</sup>
Module 03 Biographical Narrative: Gospels	Lesson 04 Gospels & Jesus	Read deSilva, Ch. 4 (pp. 145-193)	Sunday, Mar. 08 <sup>th</sup>
	Lesson 05 Gospel of Matthew	Read deSilva, Ch. 6 (pp. 234-297) Read the Gospel of Matthew	Sunday, Mar. 15 <sup>th</sup>
	Lesson 06 Gospel of John	Read deSilva, Ch. 9 (pp. 391-448) Read the Gospel of John	Sunday, Mar. 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Module 04 Historical Narrative	Lesson 07 Book of Acts	Read deSilva, Ch. 8 (pp. 348-390) Read the Book of Acts	Sunday, Mar. 29 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Spring Semester Reading Week from March 30-April 03, 2009</i>			
Module 05 Pauline Epistles	Lesson 08 Letters of Paul	Read deSilva, Ch. 11 (pp. 475-492) Read First Corinthians	Sunday, Apr. 12 <sup>th</sup>
	Lesson 09 Corinthian Correspondence	Read deSilva, Ch. 14 (pp. 555-597) Read Second Corinthians	Sunday, Apr. 19 <sup>th</sup>

	Lesson 10 Epistle to the Romans	Read deSilva, Ch. 15 (pp. 598-689) Read the Epistle to the Romans	Sunday, Apr. 26 <sup>th</sup>
Module 06 Non-Pauline Epistle	Lesson 11 Epistle to the Hebrews	Read deSilva, Ch. 20 (pp. 776-813) Read the Epistle to the Hebrews	Sunday, May 03 <sup>rd</sup>
Module 07 Apocalypse	Lesson 12 Book of Revelation	Read deSilva, Ch. 24 (pp. 884-932) Read the Book of Revelation	Sunday, May 10 <sup>th</sup>
Module 08 Integration	Lesson 13	The NT and the MA Programs	Sunday, May 17 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Final Exams Week from May 18-22, 2009</b>			
Module 09	Lesson 14 Final Exam	Comprehensive Final Exam	Friday, May, 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Spring Semester Ends on Friday, May 22, 2009</b>			

**Please Note:** A detailed explanation of each assignment will be posted in the Course Information Center along with a variety of other supporting documents.

### 8. Academic Integrity Policy:

In addition to maintaining integrity in their own academic pursuits, faculty have the responsibility and obligation to establish and clarify academic requirements for the work prepared by their students. Conduct that is considered dishonest includes: reusing previously and/or concurrently submitted material in another class without faculty permission, cheating by copying from another's work, allowing another to copy from one's own work, reading an examination prior to the date it is given without the instructor's permission and similar types of conduct. Unlawful duplication of copyrighted material such as music, library materials, computer software, as well as plagiarism are other examples of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is the presenting of another's ideas or writings as one's own; this would include both written and oral discourse presentations. (Seminary guidelines related to acceptable duplication practice of copyrighted materials can be found at the library's circulation desk.)

In cases of suspected student plagiarism, the instructor should take steps necessary, including meeting with the student to determine whether plagiarism has in fact been committed. In cases of student plagiarism, the instructor, working in conversation with the Dean of the student's School has four options, depending on his or her judgment regarding severity and recurrence of the problem: (1) to provide an opportunity for the student to redo the same or comparable assignment, typically with the grade for that assignment penalized to account for the act of plagiarism; (2) to record a failing grade for the assignment in question; (3) to fail the student for the course; and (4) to recommend to the Dean of the student's School that the student be dismissed from the Seminary. In every case of student plagiarism, a written report of the episode and of the disciplinary action taken should be submitted to and affirmed by the Dean of the student's School. Recurrence of plagiarism by a student will lead to the dismissal of the student from the Seminary. The student may appeal the decision of the instructor or the Dean through the normal appeal process.

**9. USING MOODLE:** The Virtual Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into <http://virtual.asburyseminary.edu> you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course. The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

**9.1. The Course Information Center**, in the center of your screen, contains many features to be used throughout the semester:

**9.1.1. Course News and Announcements**, where I will post items important for the entire class;

**9.1.2. Syllabus**, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;

**9.1.3. To Professor**, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;

**9.1.4. Course Questions**, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so other may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;

**9.1.5. Prayer Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;

**9.1.6. Open Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussion on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.

**9.2. Modules**, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

**9.3. Resources**, a section located on the left side, provides links to items you may want to use often in the semester.

### 10. COURSE RESOURCES:

#### 10.1. ExL Support Contact Information:

**10.1.1.** For *general questions and administrative assistance regarding the ExL program*, contact Dale Hale: [ExL\\_Office@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu). Phone: (859) 858-2393.

**10.1.2.** For *technical support, library research support, library loans, and ExL media* contact Information Commons: [Info\\_Commons@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu). Phone: (859) 858-2233; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733.



**10.2. Accessing Information Commons Materials:**

**10.2.1. General Questions:** The Information Commons is a “one-stop shop” for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/hours.htm>.

**10.2.2. Materials Requests:**

**10.2.2.1.** To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm>.

**10.2.2.2.** ExL Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

**10.2.2.3.** ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

**10.2.3. Research Questions:** ExL students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

**10.2.4. Online Databases:** To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm> and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0=s to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student ID).

**11. COPYRIGHT MATTERS:**

**11.1. Copyright Policies:** The copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

**11.2. ExL Media Copyright Information:** By the using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.

**12. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:****12.1. Bibliography:**

Bauer, David R. *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003.

Porter, Stanley E., and Lee Martin McDonald. *New Testament Introduction*. IBR Bibliographies 12. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

**12.2. Introduction to/Survey of the NT:**

Achtemeier, Paul J., Joel B. Green, and Marianne Meye Thompson. *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Barclay, William. *A Beginner's Guide to the New Testament*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1992.

Barker, Glenn W., William L. Lane, and J. Ramsey Michaels. *The New Testament Speaks*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Bauman, Edward W. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961.

Beker, J. Christiaan. *The New Testament: A Thematic Introduction*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.

Bornkamm, Günther. *The New Testament: A Guide to Its Writings*. Translated by Reginald H. Fuller and Ilse Fuller. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973.

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. The Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Carson, D. A., Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

Childs, Brevard S. *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction*. Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1994.

Collins, Raymond F. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983.

Cullmann, Oscar. *The New Testament: An Introduction for the General Reader*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968.

Davies, Stevan L. *New Testament Fundamentals*. Rev. ed. Sonoma, Ca.: Polebridge, 1994.

Davies, W. D. *Invitation to the New Testament: A Guide to Its Main Witnesses*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966.

deSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004.

Dibelius, Martin. *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1936.

Drane, John. *Introducing the New Testament*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1986.

Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. 3d ed. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Elwell, Walter A., and Robert W. Yarbrough. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

- Enslin, Morton Scott. *The Literature of the Christian Movement*. Part III of *Christian Beginnings*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938.
- Fuller, Reginald H. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament*. 2d ed. London: Duckworth, 1971.
- Goodspeed, Edgar J. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937.
- Grant, Robert M. *A Historical Introduction to the New Testament*. New York and Evanston, Ill.: Harper & Row, 1963.
- Gundry, Robert H. *A Survey of the New Testament*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Guthrie, Donald. *New Testament Introduction*. 4th ed. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1990.
- Harris, Stephen L. *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction*. 3d ed. Mountain View, Ca.: Mayfield, 1999.
- Harrison, Everett F. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.
- Harvey, A. E. *Something Overheard: An Invitation to the New Testament*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1977.
- Holladay, Carl R. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005.
- Hunter, Archibald M. *Introducing the New Testament*. 3d rev. ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972.
- Jensen, Irving L. *Jensen's Survey of the New Testament*. Chicago: Moody, 1981.
- Johnson, Luke T. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. Rev. ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999.
- Juel, Donald with James S. Ackerman and Thayer S. Warshaw. *An Introduction to New Testament Literature*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1978.
- Kee, Howard C. *Understanding the New Testament*. 5th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1993.
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- Kümmel, Werner Georg. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Rev. ed. Translated by Howard C. Kee. Nashville: Abingdon, 1975.
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- Martin, Ralph P. *New Testament Foundations: A Guide for Christian Students*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 and 1978.
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- Metzger, Bruce Manning. *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content*. 3d ed. rev. and enl. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
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- Zahn, Theodor. *Introduction to the New Testament*. 3 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1909.